UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

(Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Editor, 1880-1918)

John Haynes Holmes
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The Slaughter of the Guilty

By ALSON H. ROBINSON

The Ordeal of Fire in India

By G. B. HALSTEAD

Unitarianism and Contemporary Life

By HOMER LEWIS SHEFFER
RICHARD BATES ELLIS
ERNEST M. WHITESMITH
ETHELRED BROWN

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

Our Geneva Correspondent Receives Encouragement

I always feel honored when I get a letter from Charles Strong of Melbourne, Australian correspondent of UNITY, as I did yesterday, at Geneva. Over ten years ago, I had the good fortune of cooperating with him for a year in the important work of the "Australian Church"—of which he has been pastor over half a century. No one stands higher in the esteem of the people of that Commonwealth than this man who went to Australia sixty years ago and ever since has given his ten talents to the highest life of mankind. About fifty years ago, he founded this Church—free, independent, socially-minded, undoctrinal—like the walls of Heaven, four-square. He had been brought up after the manner of the strictest of the sects of the Scotch, but early found his liberty—and now has the satisfaction of knowing that that for which he stood as a pioneer has been accepted by the pulpit and pew. He has had that rare pleasure of making the road and walking on it.

I sincerely hope that someone with understanding will write his history. It would be a fine human document, as well as highly illuminating to the important chapter of life being performed in Australia. As an interesting sample, when his country passed through the Boer war, and the last big war, and Australia's youth were sailing away to unknown life and often to death, he stood both times publicly opposed to the wars. This and his advanced church ideas and sympathy with labor brought much opposition—to the end that his long life has been lively and full of tireless activity. Never has his sincerity or motive been assailed.

When I get a little letter like the following, a wish goes up that his correspondence may be faithfully kept and edited. (I regret to explain, that I cannot claim relationship with this Strong—for, 300 years ago my ancestor sailed away from England, while his forebears were in the Highlands.)

Concord, Armadale, May 25, 1932

"My dear Jonah" (I had referred to myself as a "Jonah."):

"I fear that you are a rationalist! Jonah did not emerge from an American Liner, but from the stomach of a fish—a real fish, not an allegorical one. Thank you all the same for the interesting paragraphs you have supplied to *Peaceward*.

"I can imagine the attraction Geneva has for you. I remember how many years ago (about sixty) visiting the old historian—d'Aubigne—in his study. I was a traveling tutor and my pupil had a friend who was I think staying with Merle d'Aubigne.

"Have you gone about Switzerland? Ah! those were the days! Knapsacks on back, diligences and caddies and mules! Have you been up Pilatus and

(*Continued on page* 31)

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CX MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1932 Number 2

GANDHI

Serene he waits within his prison cell;
His hours of silence bring their blessing sweet;
Night weaves for him no dark and mystic spell
Angels on guard are at his head and feet.
Winds are his messengers; they breathe his will
To starving millions bowed by grief and shame;
His vibrant words command, enforce and thrill;
They are his servants born of fire and flame.

Gandhi—the hater of all slothful ease;
Frailest of men to face a ruthless foe;
Greater than arms or kings, for none of these
Can quench that deathless soul nor lay it low.
Some day—some day—bursting her prison-bars,
When the great light shall dawn on land and sea,
India shall lift her brow to greet the stars,
And with God's hand to lead her—*shall be free!*

H. M. Spalding.

Gandhi's fast, announced as this editorial is written and in all probability begun as it is read, can only be understood as directed primarily not at the situation in England but at the situation in India. It will be remembered that the communal award, denounced by the Mahatma as so unsatisfactory and unjust, was made in default of agreement among the Indian communities themselves. Responsibility for this default lies primarily with minority groups in India which, for one reason or another, are failing to make common cause with the National Congress. Britain of course is taking full advantage of this internal discord to place upon India, in the name of constitutional freedom, a political system which, as Gandhi pointed out in his correspondence with MacDonald, means the permanent enslavement of the Indian people, especially the "untouchables." Now, once before Gandhi was confronted with internal divisions which threatened to wreck the Indian cause. This was in the fall of 1924, when Moslems and Hindus were at one another's throats. At that time also there were some repressive Bengal Ordinances. In this crisis, Gandhi announced and carried through his famous 21-days fast, which so touched and overawed the hearts of the leaders of all communities, and so stirred the common people, that discord was ended, and the "Delhi Pact" signed and sealed as the bond of union. It seems certain that the Mahatma is now entering upon another sacrificial fast to the same end of uniting India once again. In the face of his sublime self-abnegation, and of the profound stirring of the waters of public compassion, the important Indian groups will be melted into submission, and reach agreement not only on the communal problem but on others as well. Thus Britain will be confronted with a united nation, and the new enslavement of India under dishonest constitutional forms be made impossible. Here is Gandhi again the consummate statesman, and the perfect saint. "If Gandhi wins a communal agreement out of this," writes Richard B. Gregg, commenting privately upon this great episode, "it will be a unique demonstration of the political power of love."

There may have been duller campaigns in the history of this nation than the present little croquet-match for the presidency, but if so we do not chance to recall them. When the doings of a cheap and flashy politician like the late Mayor of New York can become the one exciting political episode of the day, it is evident that the national contest has reached a "new low" of public interest. President Hoover, either confident or despairing of election, has made one speech, dignified, illuminating, and the ablest of his career, and now has lapsed into silence. Governor Roosevelt, devoid of ideas, is talking abundantly, but with results disastrous to his candidacy. He seems to swing, pendulum-like, between the two extremes of his Columbus (Ohio) speech, on the one hand, which was so vulnerable that it was straightway demolished by third- and fourth-rate men, and, on the other hand, of his Bridgeport (Connecticut) speech, which was such a "dud" that it drew no reply or even attention. As for Norman Thomas, the one really active and effective campaigner in the field, he has few channels of publicity, and is making no impression commensurate with his efforts. Of course, the prevailing lack of money is one good reason why this campaign is so amazingly quiet. It takes funds—and a lot of funds, too—to start a rocket which will carry from Maine to California. Such funds simply do not exist in the party chests. Therefore, like boys who have no fireworks on the great and glorious Fourth, the political managers are forced to resort to such tin-can devices as may come most readily to hand. Also, it needs a responsive public to put over an exciting campaign. Just now the public is too much engaged with the task of keeping the wolf from the door, to listen much to the bed-

time story-tellers on the radio. Furthermore, we have a conviction that millions of citizens know in their hearts that Hoover and Roosevelt are no oracles in this matter of overcoming the depression, and that neither of the two old parties is going to bring salvation. The public today is a disillusioned public, and thus most emphatically in the "O, yeah?" mood. So the campaign is dull, hopelessly dull. And we venture to prophesy that it will remain dull to the fizzling end in November.

The recent poll of the members of the Socialist party recording a 3 to 1 vote in favor of the anti-Prohibition plank in the Party platform shows that Socialists are just like all the rest of human nature. Their hard-and-fast economic philosophy affects not at all their processes of thought and modes of action. They fall victims to carefully organized propaganda canards and falsehoods just as quickly as the mere Democrats and Republicans they are never tired of ridiculing. Their conduct in 1914, at the outbreak of the Great War, will never be forgotten. Here for a generation the Socialists had been telling the world that wars are always caused by definite economic forces playing equally upon all countries, that war is a part of the international capitalistic order, that armaments and all the paraphernalia of war spring not from patriotism but from private profits. To take part in any war was to support the existing system and thus to betray the cause of the workers. Yet, when the European rulers lifted their war-cries and beat their drums and hoisted their flags, the Socialists of every country, with pitiful individual exceptions, went marching off to the front just like the moronic millions whose minds had never been enlightened by Karl Marx. Now, in the Socialist surrender to the anti-Prohibition crusade, we see again another performance of the same kind. Here is a campaign sustained by propaganda which originates from sources as obvious as they are selfish. These sources are four in number: (1) brewers and distillers seeking restoration of a highly profitable private business; (2) wealthy men seeking reduction of income-taxes through new taxes on legalized liquor; (3) the newspaper press seeking liquor "ads"; (4) and politicians hungry for the old graft. Anything more patent than this has never been seen, and yet the Socialists "fall" for it, just as they fell for the imperialists' war in '14. And behold the spectacle—Socialists lined up with Democrats and Republicans, Norman Thomas walking shoulder to shoulder with Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt, for the return of "booze"! If this is the new Socialism we hear so much about, we have one more sure sign of the demoralization of our age.

Suppose that the Germans had won the Great War. Suppose that their armies had crossed the ocean and taken possession of our country. Suppose that Ludendorff and Hindenburg had marched to Washington and dictated terms of peace under the great dome of the Capitol. Suppose, in a word, that all the horrible nightmares of the 1917-18 propaganda films in the movies about the invading Huns and what not, had come true. What would have happened? Among other things, assuredly, a tribute would have been levied on the nation similar to the tribute levied upon France in 1871—not dissimilar, we imagine, to the huge reparations tribute levied upon Germany by the Allies in 1919. We would have been forced, in other words, to pay huge sums of money out of our government treasury to our triumphant conquerors. How large would this tribute have been? As large as the bonus now being paid, and still to be paid in ever huger sums for decades to come, to our World War veterans, if the Legion has its way? Hardly!—not even a victor on the field of battle would dare to impose upon his helpless victim such billions of dollars tribute as the veterans are now demanding of Washington. It is only when the problem is stated in this fashion that we see what the bonus really means. We went into the war, and defeated our enemy. Then our own army turns upon us, and reduces us to a condition of humiliation and servitude which rivals anything that this enemy could have done against us. The Legion in its bonus demands, in other words, is nothing more nor less than a horde of plunderers bent on looting the nation exactly as an army of foreign invaders would do. As a pacifist who knows that war is a scourge which brings ruin to victor and vanquished alike, we can view this situation with perfect philosophical detachment. The nation is getting only what was coming to it after our mad entrance into the War in 1917! But, none the less, we believe in having events set forth in their right terms. The bonus is—*loot!*

Where is revolution going to break out next? Spain, Chile, Siam, exploding in due succession, show that upheavals may come anywhere at any time. Who can count the revolutions which have taken place since Russia in 1917, and Germany and Austria in 1918? There have been other revolutionary periods of history. The eighth and ninth decades of the eighteenth century, signalized by such dates as 1775 and 1789, and the fifth decade of the nineteenth century, glorified by such a year as 1848, are the periods which come most readily to mind. But surely both of these periods are insignificant as compared with this revolutionary age in which we are living. This age, also, is unique in the character or quality, as well as number, of its revolutions. Social overturns today are economic as well as political—or, rather, the political upsets are simply symptomatic of fundamental economic changes. This is probably truer of all revolutions than we are

commonly willing to recognize. But the economic aspect of life is surely dominant to a degree and with an intensity today which was never true before. The roots of society are in our time being up-turned and uptorn. To change the figure!—an old world is perishing, and a new world is being born. We are living, in other words, in one of those vast creative eras in which chaos is preliminary to a new and better order. It is this fact which should give us cheer, and strength to endure whatever may occur. If we really thought this were the end of things, what were the use of carrying on at all? But knowing as we do, or should, that while darkness is on the face of the deep, the spirit of God is yet moving over the waters, may we not wait with patience and with abundant courage the dawning of the new day, however long delayed! We shall yet see, as God saw in the beginning, in that awful hour of creative turmoil and travail, that all that now happened "was good."

Sir Walter Scott, who died one hundred years ago this month (September 21, 1832), remains fixed in memory as one of the best beloved authors of all time. A vigorous, wholesome, honest gentleman, heroic as few men have ever been heroic, the story of his days is unforgettable. The spontaneous gaiety of his early years, the splendid prosperity of his mid-career, the overwhelming tragedy of the close—what a saga it is, incomparably more dramatic and moving than any tale that ever came even from Scott's own pen! As an author, Sir Walter's production was unparalleled for variety and abundance. Poet, novelist, biographer, historian, dramatist, balladist, critic, chronicler, his output during the triumphant three decades from the publication of the famous "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" (1802) to that of the last of the Waverleys, "Count Robert of Paris" (1832), is well nigh incredible. One year alone, the *annus mirabilis,* witnessed the appearance of three novels, two plays, and numerous lesser works. The level of achievement, as well as the sheer bulk, of these writings, is extraordinary. Only as a dramatist did Scott entirely fail. In all other departments of literature he wrote books which were important, widely read, and gratefully remembered. But it was as a poet and novelist, of course, that his name went 'round the world and remains today one of the brightest stars in the literary firmament. In the field of poetry, his narrative romances are most famous, and, in the case of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," "Marmion," and "The Lady of the Lake," still read; but his lyrics and ballads, as great as any pieces of the kind in English literature, contain the really immortal element in his poetic writings. As for his novels, the long series of the Waverleys, the first of their kind, created an epoch as definitely as the plays of Shakespeare. Indeed, only in the works of the Stratford bard can be found anywhere so gorgeous a pageant of imagination and vision as in the stories of Sir Walter Scott. These also remain immortal for their influence and their own abiding glory. Lastly, among Scott's works, there is the "Journal"—the noblest autobiographical document in all literature. Is it strange that, after a full century, Scott's name is wellnigh as bright as ever!

The Slaughter of the Guilty

The slaughter of the innocents has begun. School has opened! Reluctantly and with laggard pace millions of defenseless children are paying tribute to the god of wisdom. To be sure, that allusion to the laggard pace may be putting it a little strong, since there seems to be a saturation point to the almost insatiable appetite of a child for play. Then again some children strangely enough seem to prefer study to play, at least as a steady diet; and the prospect of satisfying that gregarious instinct which sometimes gets neglected in the mountains or at the seashore, and in other solitary places, if such there be, presents itself rather pleasingly.

So it may not be so bad as it sounds from the point of view of the potential victim. In fact it may be not the innocent but the guilty who are about to be slaughtered. Something not unrelated to that process has been going on during the period which has transpired since the close of school last June. Ostensibly children go to school to take our jobs when we are through with them; but it has turned out that some of them have qualified for the jobs before we were ready to give them up. Apparently they were better educated than we were, or perhaps it was a sort of educational retribution. Maybe the more children we send to school the worse off it is for all of us.

The disadvantages of being educated have recently been rather pointedly defined by Mr. A. J. Nock. He begins by emphasizing a familiar distinction between training and education. The former bears upon what a person can do or get, while education concerns itself with what he may become or be. Mr. Nock says that a number of years ago he suggested that we ought to have at least one set of institutions which should be strictly and rigidly educational, kept in perpetual quarantine against the contagion of training. Then suddenly he discovered, that given the sort of environment in which an educated man today must live he would be a very unhappy person if he were educated.

If you want to survive, you've got to do the sort of thing that society does.

But the educated man on the whole cannot do this. For one thing he becomes a solitary figure. Your trained person can direct his energy into a single narrow channel of interest, your educated person if he is to follow his impulse has to look at life as a whole. This makes him a solitary person. For another thing education makes a man dissatisfied, because it is so difficult for him to get the things that seem to him important. The politician may offer a chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage, and your trained man may have acquired the technique of achieving this earthly paradise. Your educated man may like stewed chicken and motor cars as much as anybody else, but there are other things that the society around him does not care for, and will not countenance. Therefore, he is a dissatisfied person.

Education tends to inculcate certain partialities and repugnances from which the trained man is relatively free. The result is that an educated person will not make a public spectacle of himself, does not want to push himself forward; the consequence of which is that the other fellow gets the job—these are obvious disadvantages. If that's what comes of education the sooner we close the schools the better.

But it so happens that some of us are neither trained nor educated. What about us? It has to be confessed that the standard which Mr. Nock sets for the educated man is projected into a highly rarified atmosphere where most of us would find difficulty in getting our breath. Few there be who will be able to qualify, whatever the qualifications may be. On the other hand the great army of trained men is diminishing constantly. Every time they invent a new machine a whole regiment of trained men goes out of business. The other day I went through the power plant of a great hydro-electric development which has lately been completed on the Connecticut River at Monroe, N. H. The guide told us about the millions of dollars which were spent in the construction of the dam, the vast amount of current which was transmitted to Boston every twenty-four hours for illumination and other purposes, until my head swam in the infinity of costs and kilowatts. But I saw no men around. It was lonesome. I inquired about it and was told that it required exactly nineteen men to run the entire works. If your educated man is unhappy, perhaps your trained man is on the road to extinction.

Still there are a lot of us left. Where do we stand as regards this matter of education? Dean Inge says that "The modern world belongs to the half-educated, a rather difficult class, because they do not realize how little they know." That means us. This is not the first time that this phrase has been used. A number of years ago Prof. Thorndike, of Teacher's College, increased the catalogue of the various psychologies, by adding one on the psychology of the half-educated. As he sees it, there are three points by which the thinking of so many of us is to be characterized:

First, by belief in magic. The mentality of the great run of us hasn't changed very much since Saul consulted the Witch of Endor as to the fortunes of his battle with the Philistines. You may have observed, if you have been fortunate enough to get a vacation this summer, that the roadside tents where they tell your fortune have been doing a thriving business. To be sure you wouldn't like to have your friends see you coming out from such a place, but you just wonder what you might be told if you once got inside. Most of us regard ourselves as entitled to a bit of luck. Having carried insurance on our houses for ten years, and have the thing burn down five minutes after the expiration of the policy is worse luck than most of us are entitled to.

In the second place most of us belong to this difficult class of the half-educated by reason of the fact that we restrict our thought to self-justification. That is to say, most of us find a reason for everything in which we are guided or impelled by our impulses. If we want to play golf we argue that it is good for our health. If we fail to make money—money making is a low motive of life anyhow! This is called rationalizing, though irrationalizing would be a better word for it.

In the third place, Prof. Thorndike points out that this class to which most of us belong is characterized by inability to think a problem through. The farmer who works ten hours a day for twelve cows, and cannot tell whether the cows support him or he supports the cows is an example of the sort of thing that most of us are engaged in.

There are as many cures proposed for this painful and dangerous malady of half-education as there are contributions to its existence. Thorndike says we need more expert thinking, more specialists. Wherever there is an expert, let him be our guide and do our thinking for us. That sounds all right to most of us, since we are agreed that thinking is not so easy, and isn't worth much after you have done it. A number of years ago Dallas Lore Sharp stirred us all up by suggesting that in order to educate for a democracy there must be a common course of study for all —rich and poor, talented and deficient. If he were living today he would doubtless glory in his vision come true through the educational enterprises of the radio. And if somebody says you don't have to listen, just try living in a modern apartment house! We may be all wrong in these aspersions, Dr. Crothers may have been much nearer the truth in his defense of "the honorable points of ignorance."

Perhaps we need a new definition to set us on our way; a sort of Reconstruction Finance Corporation program in education. Definitions commonly fail to define, but this one sounds rather well:

To educate is to instruct the intellect in the laws of nature, including those of man and his ways, as well as things and their forces, and to fashion the affections and the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws.

But Prof. Dingle, a distinguished and clear-headed scientist comes along and spoils all that by insisting that there is no such thing as a law of nature inherent in the texture of things. A law of nature is simply an expression in the most suitable terms of what we observe. In other words, the educated person is a person who conforms to what he observes.

Hurry up, we'll be late to school!

ALSON H. ROBINSON

The Ordeal of Fire In India

A Series of Four Articles

IV—Conclusion

18. Renewal of Civil Disobedience the Only Way to Save the Tenants.

"You should unhesitatingly take necessary steps to meet every situation." Cable from Gandhi to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Finally, in desperation, on July 18th, 1931, after taking into careful consideration the reports of the Committees appointed by the Provincial Congress Committee, it was resolved that "this Council," the Provincial Council, "is definitely of the opinion that the terms of the truce are being persistently violated by the local authorities, and strong efforts are being made to undermine the Congress Organization in this Province. The Council notes, that, atrocities of various kinds are being committed on the tenants by Government officials as well as Zemindars," (at this point in the resolution many of the charges were enumerated), "and therefore feels that the state of affairs has now become intolerable. It therefore requests the Working Committee of the Congress either to bring about an immediate cessation of this condition of affairs or authorize this Council or the Provincial Congress to take such steps as it may deem necessary under the circumstances."

The Government, now realizing that conditions were very, very serious, appointed a Committee, "of three officials and twelve non-officials," the latter all zemindars. There were no tenants represented. One Congressman was invited to attend the sessions of this Committee, but the invitation was sent too late for him to attend. This Committee recommended further slight remissions, but not amounting to more than 20%, at the most in the case of the non-occupancy tenants, and this figure in only a few districts, one, to be exact, Allahabad. It promised justice in the matter of arrears and ejectments, empty promise as was subsequently discovered.

At last, on October 18th, 1931, Mr. T. K. Sherwani wrote to Shri Vallabhbhai Patel, the President of the All-India Congress, "that under the circumstances I would request you and the Working Committee to authorize our Provincial Congress Committee to take action in the Allahabad district," (where conditions were most critical), "or in other places if it thinks necessary." Gandhi had previously cabled, in reply to the cable of Jawaharlal Nehru, "You should unhesitatingly take necessary steps to meet every situation." Again on the 5th of November, after the U. P. Congress had tried in vain to get more relief measures for the tenants from the Government, Mr. T. A. K. Sherwani wrote to Shri Vallabhbhai Patel for permission to start "defensive direct action" to save the tenants. On the 10th Patel replied.

I have received your letter of the 5th regarding permission for defensive action against the agrarian policy of Government in your Province. I have carefully considered the resolutions of your Committee and I am glad to note that no efforts are being spared to obtain relief by means of negotiation and representation. However, it seems almost certain that your efforts will not succeed in securing a fair measure of relief to which the tenants are entitled under the present conditions, and in several districts they will be compelled to pay the amount of rent which in many cases it will not be possible for them to pay, even by selling their cattle and all their belongings. I realize that it would be impossible for the Congress Organization in your Province to merely stand by and do nothing to help them in this fearful crisis. I see no alternative before your Committee but to take the only possible course of defensive action by advising the peasants to refuse voluntarily to pay any rent or revenue till adequate relief is secured. I hereby authorize the Council of the United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee to take such defensive action as may be deemed necessary including the non-payment of rent or revenue by the peasants in the Allahabad District, and such other areas of the Province as may be selected by the said Council from time to time. I trust your Committee will take particular care to acquaint all the tenants and workers concerned with the sufferings and sacrifices they will have to undergo and the necessity of preserving a perfectly non-violent atmosphere during the struggle in spite of any provocation and hardship.

Yours sincerely,
Vallabhbhai.

And now, Mr. Man-of-the-Street, you know why and how Gandhi's lieutenants in the United Provinces played his cards for him, really the nation's cards, and you can understand why Civil Disobedience was renewed. The mystery has cleared, I hope, and the misgivings, vanished. As soon as Civil Disobedience was declared in one Province, Government declared an actual state of war. The former state had been something like the "undeclared war" just fought in China. It declared the Congress an illegal body, once again and arrested its leaders in the U. P. etc. Since the Provincial organization is part and parcel of the National, it was but natural that this National Body should be declared illegal and seditious, also, and its leaders jailed. This was particularly necessary, from the Government point of view, because the National body had given its consent to the renewal of civil disobedience in the United Provinces. So ends this story!

19. Concluding Observations on Injustice of Present Land Tenure System in India.

In concluding this section, Mr. Man-of-the-Street, let me record a few observations about the wicked, medieval land tenure system that prevails in the United Provinces and in most sections of British India. I

do not intend to enter upon a dissertation. I am concerned, principally, with the plain practical facts of the system, and the hardships it works on the peoples of India.

Liberal Government officials, Britishers as well as Indians, have testified to the wrongness and injustice of this system of land tenure. Mr. C. J. O'Donnell, who held in his own day one of the chief administrative positions in the Government of India, has declared,

> It makes little difference to the three hundred million Indian peasants what the Simon Commission may recommend, but I fear that the tenant will remain the most pathetic figure in the British Empire; for his masters have ever been unjust to him, and Christendom will have one more failure to its credit.

Mr. H. N. Brailsford, Member of Parliament, a sturdy, loyal friend of India, and one who has carefully studied, at first hand the system, says,

> If in outline this land tenure system shocks, it does not improve on closer inspection . . . it is monstrous. These tenants, as I saw them living not far from Agra, and around Meerut, were living in poverty so abject that one despairs of depicting it. The part of their meagre surplus which goes as rent is tribute to an idle parasite, the zemindar, who makes no pretense of service, and has not even the sanction of antiquity behind his licensed robbery.

Rabindranath Tagore, the Poet Laureate of India, by no means a rabid politician or fire-brand Congressman, writes again of "the poverty of the Indian village, causing it to sink down under the weight of a land tax too heavy to be borne."

20. "No Man Can Serve Two Masters."

Why, then you ask, is it that so many fine, high-minded, cultured and capable Britishers, members of the "Heaven-born Service," throw in their lot with such a system and help to perpetuate it? A variety of answers might be given to such a question. I will give mine for what it is worth. I firmly believe that part of the explanation lies in the weakness, whether it be intellectual, spiritual or moral, or all three, of otherwise strong and good men to try to work a "bad" system, just as thousands of good Christians are still trying to work the war system, as futile and dangerous as it is, or the systems of imperialism, capitalism, etc. Everyone is not ready yet to admit the complete inadequacy for our modern world of systems which every bit of genuine truth, justice and reality condemn. In this fact, I suppose, lies both *the reason for* and *the hope of* the liberal minorities all over the world. These British Administrators in India are giving their lives, their strength, their energy, their skill, of course, all well compensated for, in a perfectly vain attempt to bolster up an evil system, just as millions laid down their lives on the battlefields of a war, to end wars, the very name of which slogan today is a mockery and a shame to civilization. Having observed countless Indian officials at their tasks, it is not possible for me to call into question the sincerity of most of them. They believe in their work, in many cases, with the zeal and passion of old-time missionaries. But, working in an evil, imperial system, and, mind you, the whole conception of empires is wrong and immoral, being based on the denial of liberty to a country or countries, and fortified by the doctrine of Might is Right, that delicate, sensitive, God-given mechanism, lying deep within the recesses of each human soul, by which right and wrong are distinguished, call its conscience if you will, has been rendered insensitive and inefficient, as any delicate instrument with improper use. Any person today, entering upon an active association with an Empire, be it the British, or any other, must pay a price. The price is a high one. It involves the damaging of that priceless inner instrument, sometimes rendering it permanently and wholly useless, the possession of which is one of man's chief claims to conceive of himself as higher than the apes, yea, a son of God. "No man can serve two masters," the great Nazarene carefully pointed out. He knew the price Caesar had paid for his allegiance to an Empire.

21. Government-Administered Estates No Better Than Others.

If the Government fully realized the wrongness of the land tenure system, why should we not find those estates administered directly by the Government greatly improved and reformed, and serving as refreshing contrasts to the Indian-administered ones? Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru threw out such a challenge to the Government in the course of a letter. He wrote,

> The Court of Ward Estates (estates administered directly by Government), could set a good example . . . there are Indian zemindars of all kinds, good and bad, and it may be that even the local Government cannot control all of them. But a strong expression of opinion (he meant in the way of concrete action) will go a long way in limiting the aggressive activities of those zemindars who are apt to err.

But, as the Pant Report observes,

> Spectacular methods for the collection of rents were adopted in the Court of Wards Estates. The lot of the tenants in the estates under the direct management of the Government is not enviable. The managers are hardly distinguishable from the district officers and sometimes both the offices are held by the same individual. The tenants in the villages under the Court of Wards have little chance of taking any complaint successfully to the police or the executive officers. They are at the mercy of the tax collectors.

What a comment! It is recorded that in these estates, illegal and unauthorized collection of money and food stuffs invariably occur, tenants have been beaten, even to death, by estate employees, women have been ill-treated, homes looted, etc. In Balrampur, the largest estate in the Court of Wards it is recorded that "everybody lives in dread of the Belrampur estate." Miss Emerson, a young American lady, who spent a year in one of the villages of this Estate, has written,

> As the months passed, one aspect of the tahsil administration impressed itself on me deeply. Although the estate is for the time being under the Government control, and could scarcely hope for an abler manager with higher personal standards than kunwar Jasbir Singh, many of the minor officials showed a tendency to mercilessly exploit those over whom they exercised power. Unless those charged with administrative duties are stripped of the prerogatives of a sacred official class and acquire a little practical idealism, and unless the voiceless millions are properly equipped for their own self-defense, laws merely furnish new excuses for those on top indirectly to exploit and grind down the masses.

22. Keeping the Scales of Injustice Even.

The Government is always talking about "keeping the scales even between the landlords and the tenants." Mr. E. C. Melville, Home Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy, wrote to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on Oct. 19, 1931, in answer to one of his many letters concerning the plight of the tenants,

> His Excellency wishes me to thank you for your letter of Oct. 16th, etc. . . . His Excellency wishes me to add that he is sure that Sir Malcolm Hailey is taking the keenest personal interest in the agrarian situation in the U. P. and knows that he will do his best to keep the balance between the landlord and the tenant.

Over and over again as one reads through the exchange of correspondence between the Government and the Congress, one runs across these terms of "keeping the balance," "keeping the scales even," but

how absurd they are. Are we to assume that these two bodies, the great starving, exploited mass, and the few, rich, parasitic landlords are really equal. I fear the balance that the Government talks of preserving is not that of the conventional balance of justice as against injustice. The Imperial scales, an imperial substitute for the scales of absolute justice, always must register inequality, not equality. Why, you ask? Because, let the fact be known that only by maintaining the "status quo," the present wicked land tenure system, can the Indian Empire get the revenue it needs to keep alive. It's life is inextricably linked to the life of the land tenure system now prevailing. The death of the one means the death of the other.

"We wonder how long the Government will be able to hold the scales even in this manner? We wonder how long people will let this Government mishandle such vital questions," ponders the Pant Report. We wonder, too, don't we, Mr. Man-of-the-Street?

G. B. HALSTEAD.

Appendix

(1)—*The Indian Public Dept.**

There is no better way of understanding the full injustice and essential wrongness of British Rule in India than through a careful study of the so-called Indian Public Debt. In a great respect the whole story of the present public debt is but one long, bloody and costly military parade. Throughout it one hears and sees marching British armies, ever fighting their way on to make the west meet the east, and to establish that reign of "law and order," which has meant so much to the British exploiter, and so little to the downtrodden masses of India, for it has been on these masses that the conquering armies have been fed.

England, in her more enlightened moments, has publicly professed that her conquest and administration of India has been largely in the nature of a divinely-endowed Trust. Imperial proclamation after proclamation, down through the years, has stressed this imperial vision of a God-granted trusteeship of the peoples of India. But the early Empire builders, when they evolved such a "noble" concept of their Indian Empire, evidently overlooked two very important and very natural implications of all trusteeships, namely, that some day the beneficiary comes of age, and takes over the trust, and, when that day comes, demands the right to scrutinize, audit and adjust, if necessary, the accounts of the trust. The day of reckoning has come for India! The beneficiary is of age. Of course it has been of age many years, but the Trustee has been too slow and conservative to recognize or admit it.

In the Lahore session of the All India National Congress, Jan., 1929, the Indian people recorded that "every obligation and every concession (parts of the public debt) no matter how incurred or given will be repudiated if not found to be just and justifiable." Britain trembled when it heard these words from the beneficiary. And well it might! High Government officials immediately began to talk of "these threats of debt repudiation which were dealing serious blows to confidence in India," and which they were sure, "no responsible Indian would take seriously." Even Ramsay MacDonald became so alarmed that he blurted out in the last Round Table Conference in London, that, "It is not the intention of the British Government to allow a state of affairs to arise in India in which the repudiation of the Government Debt would be a practical possibility." But, as Britain knows only too well, as the result of her American and Irish experiences, the day India is free, she will refer this public debt to an impartial tribunal, which means *repudiation!*

The All-India National Congress has recently issued a very important report dealing with India's claim for debt repudiation. We find from it that the total claimed is considerably more than $4,513,875,000.

Since the claim for repudiation of nearly every item constituting the total has been strengthened and supported by statements of leading British Administrators, there is every chance that India's claim shall be recognized and allowed. What this will mean for Britain I leave to your imagination!

(2)—*Recent Repressive Ordinances.*†

Freedom of speech, press, conscience and movement, the sanctity of person, home and business have ever been counted "pearls of great price" by all civilized peoples. We find no exception to this truism in and among the peoples of India. Today India is denied every civil liberty but her sons and daughters are dauntless. The more ruthless the violation of their civil liberties, the more intense and fierce has been the struggle for liberty. Herein lies the explanation of the present unparalleled size and extent of the Indian civil disobedience movement launched in January of this year. If India has witnessed since the first of the current year the promulgation of martial law by its alien, bureaucratic Government on an even "undreamed of" scale, she has also witnessed the most tremendous national upheavel in the history of Indian nationalism.

Under the present "rule by Ordinances" freedom of speech, press and movement are denied to all "patriotic" Indians. Special courts consisting of not more than three judges and in some cases of only one judge were established to try all cases under the ordinances. These courts are granted large privileges, even to the extent of trying and sentencing political offenders without their presence in court. Wide powers for the confiscation of houses, buildings, monies, and other securities, food stuffs, business commodities, private owned public utilities, vehicles and a score of other things, far too numerous to specify, have been placed in the hands of the police and used by them ruthlessly. And, it should be remembered, there can be no legal reprisals or appeals under these ordinances, and no other civil or criminal courts of the land can call into question any decision of the special "Ordinance" courts. Parents may be, and are, made to suffer either fine or imprisonment or both for the political offenses of their children, if the offenders are under 16 years of age. This particular Ordinance is aimed directly at crushing the wing of the independence movement found among school children, where it is very strong. Section 144 of the Indian Penal Code which forbids, on threat of imprisonment, gatherings of more than five persons in any public place, is now used all over India and accounts for a majority of the arrests. Ordinances against picketting, boycotting or molesting persons or shops which sell foreign made goods, especially British, are frantic but futile efforts to safeguard Lancashire's and Manchester's superb markets of old, and of course, to stamp out, once again, budding Indian industries.

It is well for us to remember that these Ordinances, and I have referred to only a few of them, "put

*This is but a very brief summary of a larger pamphlet on the Indian Public Debt which will be published soon and can be had by applying to 105 East 22nd St., Suite 417, New York City.

†This is but a very brief summary of a larger pamphlet on Ordinances which will be published soon and can be had by applying to 105 East 22nd St., Suite 417, New York City.

down on paper nothing new which the people of India have not already suffered. They give no new machinery which the Bureaucracy has not already been fully using. They only serve to record the immediate plans and policies of Executive Authority in India.

According to the latest Press Dispatch there are more than 50,000 of the best representatives of Indian manhood and womenhood in jail today for no other reason than that they loved their country and tried to express that love through peaceful, non-violent means in dealing with the authorities, who are using lathi charges, bullets and airplane bombs. Among those jailed are Mahatma Gandhi, and the greatest leaders of that country. But the movement is marching from strength to strength.

G. B. HALSTEAD.

Unitarianism and Contemporary Life*

I.

Raymond H. Palmer in his analysis of Unitarianism, commits the popular fallacy of arguing from insufficient evidence to a general conclusion. I think he shows this lack of caution in appraising the evidence both as regards his own experience and in dealing with cases of official laxity within the free churches. This is a familiar distortion of the truth among earnest men.

Because Mr. Palmer failed to find the freedom he expected at Lynn does not mean that Unitarian ministers in general do not speak vigorously with the sympathy of their congregations. The moral bankruptcy of Unitarianism, again, is not deducible from the peculations of a couple of officials.

The same thing may be said in a greater degree of Mr. Vrest Orton, who not only argues in the same fashion, but in addition displays his own peculiar prejudices. All the tangy matter about the town of Athol, even if it were true, is wholly extraneous and does not enter into the question of Unitarian freedom at the First Church, Unitarian.

The kernel of this whole matter is Unitarian freedom. Does it, or does it not exist at Athol, and in other Unitarian churches?

All I have to guide me is my own experience at Athol, and Oklahoma City, and the spoken and written word of other Unitarian ministers.

At Athol I changed from theism to humanism, defended Sacco-Vanzetti, sympathetically treated philosophical anarchism, denounced economic imperialism, hailed "Elmer Gantry" as little less than an inspired book, advocated the recognition of Russia (both at church and at Rotary), dealt harshly with the Nordic nonsense, expressed sympathy with the Russian experiment in government, spoke realistically on the subject of sex, talked on economic questions as freely as upon philosophical issues, and attacked the wrongs of our capitalistic system.

I offer Mr. Palmer the freedom of my pulpit in Oklahoma City without consulting my board of trustees. Mr. Palmer can say in my pulpit anything he may wish to say against the capitalistic order, or he may speak freely on any other subject of his choice. I believe there are many Unitarian ministers who would welcome Mr. Palmer as I do.

It is too bad that we should lose so trenchant a critic from our ranks, for our vital life lies in frank self-analysis. Mr. Palmer does not need to go elsewhere to air our frailties. Unitarian freedom it must be remembered triumphed in the days of Parker. Certainly Parker suffered more than Palmer at the hands of his colleagues. There is doubtless some lack of sympathy with Mr. Palmer, but there is more sympathy for him among us, I venture to say, than there ever was for Theodore Parker in the days of his heresies. There are other Unitarian churches than the one at Lynn, and I cannot believe they would all be closed to Mr. Palmer, if Mr. Palmer should try for one.

We have, it must be recognized, independent churches. One church does not dictate the policies of another church. Moreover the officials at Boston have no business telling the Unitarian minister at Cleveland or at Los Angeles or anywhere else what to preach or what not to preach. This freedom applies to our congregations in their choice of a minister. A congregation may ask for advice about a minister from the American Unitarian Association officials and that advice may have great weight, but our congregations select, retain, or reject their ministers for themselves.

It happens that my church is known as a missionary church and that it is aided by the American Unitarian Association. That naturally gives our officials at Boston a special interest in the Oklahoma City church. But I would *resent* any word from Boston telling me what to say or what not to say. That word has of course never been spoken nor will it be. I don't know of any other organization in America that specifically expends its funds so freely to maintain the cause of religious liberty and incidentally the cause of freedom of speech.

In my own struggle at Oklahoma City, wealth was in the main against me. The influential laymen were against me. My board of trustees were against me. A splendid opportunity was offered official Boston to cater to money rather than justice. My resignation was suggested at first by the American Unitarian Association representative called in by both the minister and the board of trustees. I was prepared to resign for the case looked hopeless. I had no desire to minister to a congregation that did not want me. But the congregation rose up and said in effect this shall not be!

I was overwhelmingly supported when the test came. I was not permitted to resign. While it looked at one time that my departure would be the only thing that would save the church, it became clearer that if I did go the church would be wrecked. Official Boston supported the "winning" side. Consequently, the influential laymen were quite as caustic of Boston as Mr. Palmer. Regardless of administrative advice one way or the other, majority opinion in the congregation prevails. In our polity it is just too bad if that majority opinion of the congregation is against the minister. That is what counts and not official Boston.

I cannot allow Mr. Palmer's indictment of our denominational officials to go unchallenged. I too know these men. I too have had relations with them through a bitter church controversy. I know the anguish of

*These articles, or letters, are called forth by the two severely critical articles on Unitarianism published under the above title in the August 29th issue of UNITY.—Editor.

Mr. Palmer's experience. It is the sort of thing which tends to warp one's better judgment; and makes one feel the world is against him.

It is my honest judgment that no fairer body of men can be found in America than the American Unitarian Association leaders. They show manifest weakness; but it is the weakness which our church polity imposes upon them. They cannot be popes. They cannot bend churches and ministers to their will. They cannot do other than support the "winning" side in a church controversy. They have no jurisdiction over a local church. They cannot say to a congregation: "You must listen to Sheffer and Palmer for verily they are men sent of God!"

If I were a Unitarian official, and I pray devoutly that I may never be, I would have done exactly the sort of thing that the representative of the American Unitarian Association did in Oklahoma City. I don't see how I could have done otherwise and been true to the obligations of my office.

I do not expect so much as Mr. Palmer in the way of leadership in the officials of the free churches. After all they are men and not gods. The world's greatest leaders do not speak with one clear voice in the chaos of our generation. The old idea of revelation does not help us one whit. Why should we expect more from our officials than we can find anywhere else in the world? In our time the idea of prophetic leadership has gone the way of the voice from the sky. We have to come to terms with human life whose nature we are slowly and laboriously discovering.

Within our fellowship there is a wide difference of opinion. That difference of opinion is shared by both ministers and congregations. If congregations have no rights in this respect then freedom does not exist at all. It is most natural, therefore, for a strongly capitalistic church to select a minister in sympathy with the present capitalistic order and for a socialistic church to be guided by their economic views in choosing a leader. If instead of the economic preoccupation of the church there is a greater interest in theology, a strongly theistic church is not likely to call a humanist. I have made these lines sharply drawn for purposes of illustration. Usually, they are not sharply drawn at all in these respects, for the deciding factor is the personality of the minister himself.

I submit that, in keeping with our principles, we have an amazing amount of freedom in the Unitarian churches with which I am familiar, that any intelligent and balanced man can express himself as freely in them as in any assemblies in America. More than this, a movement that can take into its bosom Humanism, with all its implications, throbs with life!

The Unitarianism of the first part of the nineteenth century is unmistakably being replaced by the Unitarianism of the twentieth century, and is acquiring leaders who will be as significant at the beginning of the next century as Channing and Parker look to us now. As Unitarianism grew rank from the rotting vegetation of orthodoxy, so twentieth century Unitarianism is being renewed out of the decay of its own past by a frank acceptance of the culture of our own time.

HOMER LEWIS SHEFFER

II.

I want to make a few comments on a supplement supplied by Mr. Vrest Orton in the August 29th issue of UNITY. In a letter previously printed in UNITY my friend, Dr. Homer Lewis Sheffer of Oklahoma City, acknowledged his liberal and inspirational experience as pastor of the First Church (Unitarian) in Athol, Massachusetts, from 1926 to 1928. Mr. Orton informs us that he is so well acquainted with the matter at hand that he was moved to present the other side of the picture, which Dr. Sheffer, he thinks, either kindly or blindly omitted. But Mr. Orton proved decidedly ambitious. He did not paint the other side; he painted a different picture altogether and an imaginary one at that.

I do not know just how many years ago Mr. Orton left Athol. But I remember he was a young man when he did so. As for myself, I am told that I was born here twenty-six years ago. I am pretty sure that I am still living here, and I do know that I like it—immensely.

Now, I want to be fair. I don't mind particularly being upbraided by a gentleman, who for the past decade has "been associated in New York and elsewhere with literary people and people engaged in creative arts," for living a money-minded, unintelligent and uncultured life—principally because I don't believe that I do. Nor do I take any umbrage at being told that the local chapter of the Layman's League, of which I am the youthful president, is supported largely by a bunch of money-grabbing "nuts"—principally because I don't believe it is. Nor do I resent some cosmopolite shouting from his Brobdingnagian anthill that my home town was "spewed up by the machine age," that "Athol made for itself squalid homes, squalid people and squalid thinking," and that the only philosophy its inhabitants know is money—because I don't believe that either. If some stranger stood out in my yard and shouted at the top of his lungs that my house was a cheese box, my friends jackasses, and my religion a pink parasol, I should not get mad about it—because I know that nobody would believe him. But if somebody thought Mr. Orton's article worth printing, then that somebody will think it worth while for me to try to show why I think his article a gross misrepresentation of Unitarianism and contemporary life in Athol.

In the first place, anybody with normal eyesight and a little insight could peer out of a sleeping-car on an express train going through Athol at sixty miles an hour and see that Athol is not "a smoke-veneered mass of factories and sprawling habitations along a muddy river bank." The smoke of industry in Athol is negligible; our factories buy electrical power these days. Certainly Athol has many frame houses that would be the apple of no architect's eye. It has, however, more than its quota of attractive homes and cottages, richly shaded streets and crystal lakes; and the river is not muddy.

Athol *is* an industrial town, and I fail to see how Mr. Orton can feel this condemning when he speaks so admiringly of "grandfathers . . . who were not too proud to work." Also, he says "high society in Athol maintains a worried isolation from factory workers, tradesmen, and other low persons." I admit that there may be—though I am not at all sure of it—a small group in Athol that holds itself somewhat aloof from those less fortunate financially and educationally. Any report which lustily approves of itself in every aspect presents a doubtful verity. But I know of none of this aloofness in the Unitarian Church. Moreover, I have always regarded the townspeople as remarkably democratic and sociable. Our local chapter of the Layman's League is one of the largest in the country. It is

supported by factory owners, fruit dealers, writers, lawyers, doctors, machinists, plumbers, Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, Italians, Irishmen, Scotchmen. . . . Certainly Mr. Orton must have known nothing about all this. Our last League discussion dealt with the improvement of leisure hours and the getting rid of that old puritanical hoax that people should be running about all the time trying to appear industrious. It doesn't seem to ring true that "such minds believe anything and everything can be bought for money or turned out serially by mass production."

Mr. Orton berates our church because in order to become a Unitarian he was required only to sign a card and asked to donate some money. Although a church obviously needs money to keep it going, I doubt very much if any Unitarian church would bar a man from its doors because he had no money. On the other hand, a man may be a Unitarian and not even belong to a church. Moreover, Mr. Orton seems, somehow, to bemoan the fact that he was not required to "make a public confession, kneel in front of the congregation, be dipped in a baptismal tank, or go to church." Assuredly, we did not require any of these things, and if he really wanted them, he would have had to go elsewhere. No; the Unitarian Church did not even suggest he better attend its services. We have always felt that Unitarians are more or less thinking beings, and we wouldn't consider sending out a police patrol to corral them into our chapel. Unitarians, as far as I can see, go to church because they want to.

I do not at all agree with Mr. Orton in his recollections of certain Unitarian ministers in Athol. His characters appear to be worn-out stereotypes and not the vigorous men I knew. And from his host of hackneyed deprecations on the superficiality of church-goers I fail to draw any real significance. Of course the scale of human intelligence is widely and diversely graduated. People go to church from different motives and derive different benefits from going there. Until we have accomplished a deeper, more subtle understanding of each other, we shall be likely to consider other people's motives more superficial than our own. But I don't believe that very old ladies and beautiful girls go to the Unitarian Church in Athol either because "it is the moribund glimmer of the glory that was New England," or because "it is perfectly suited to the modern business and industrial crusader."

Mr. Orton says that "there is no possible connection between liberalism and the Unitarian Church today." Alas, perhaps I am to believe that a railroad trains runs on a macadam road, just because someone tells me so, though I can see the shining steel rails before my eyes. But if Dr. Sheffer would submit a list of the sermons he preached here in Athol, we could see his steel rails. I myself heard him speak from the pulpit on the injustice of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial, the merits of "Elmer Gantry," and liberal aspects of birth control, venereal diseases, and Einstein's god!!

More than this, when I finished Mr. Orton's article I was still groping in the dark for his interpretation of what Unitarianism really is. "The idea of Unitarianism was a wonderful idea." "Unitarianism is dead as a door nail." I began to wonder if he had ever asked any of its ministers what they were trying to do. Frankly, I felt that I had been at Plutarch again, who, to quote Poe, "begins the life of Demetrius Poliorcetes with an account of his death, and informs us that the hero could not have been as tall as his father, for the simple reason that his father, after all, was only his uncle." But I pored over the whole matter once more—not without lamenting the present day tendency to neglect some venerable Socratic principles—and in the last gasp I was rewarded with the comprehensive definition: "As I see it, Unitarianism was a movement hatched more as a cultural revolt from a dead past than anything else."

This laxity of definitives is a very fundamental error. First of all it must be admitted that, although Unitarianism is the doctrine of a sect dissenting from the orthodox churches, a Unitarian church without any doctrine at all would have psychological and religious influences on its congregation that cannot logically be ignored. But to be more specific, the doctrine of Unitarianism, as I see it, is to form an institution for the practice and teaching of liberal education and liberal religion. And I do know that I have found liberalism in my church, or I don't know what Mr. Orton would have liberalism purport—perhaps a soviet community of penguins, or something like that.

And when he commences to talk about sweetcakes at Ladies Sewing Circle teas in Athol, I grow suspicious. It smacks too much of Mencken and Lewis. Our Sewing Circles disappeared with the local cracker-barrel, and the two phrases are no longer efficacious in establishing a veritable rural atmosphere. It is just this sort of artificial criticism of small American towns that accounts for a good deal of misunderstanding and lack of sympathy. It is a partial truth, at its best.

Mr. Orton also furnishes us with the dictum that "one of the greatest faults of the Unitarian brotherhood" is that its ministers "try to bring to their people the best thought of the age." I see nothing whatever condemning in that, nor in the fact that the best thought is brought to them on Sunday in an unoriginal way. The point is to get it there.

"The best thought does not seem to pentrate them direct," but the best thought of the age does not penetrate anybody directly. We are not omniscient beings; we have to set up some means of communication with the world. If Unitarian ministers can help us make this contact and show us how to do it with a closer approximation to directness, their endeavors would seem to me highly praiseworthy. Dr. Sheffer himself has told me that he feels more and more strongly that one of the greatest duties of the modern church is to help educate its people. Mr. Orton doesn't seem to know that, either.

And certainly Athol's nut makers, who make nuts for the cars Mr. Orton rides in, do not do so with their right hands while they poise in their left hands copies of Montesquieu's "Spirit Laws," or Walter Lippman's latest synopses of world events. This is a workaday world, and their time is limited. I think it laudable that ministers, who have time to investigate these matters, should try to give concise results of their researches to their congregations on Sunday mornings. A man doesn't get a college education directly; he gets it indirectly by listening to his professors.

He says that "original thought is just as much out of place in the Unitarian Church as it is in a machine tender in an Athol nut factory." But many years before Dr. Sheffer came to Athol—and I should suppose that Mr. Orton was here at the time—I learned, and

from the Sunday morning services, the theory of evolution, the questionability of the existence of God, the mythical nature of Jesus's life, and enough liberal teachings applicable to my own life to lead me to think that Mr. Orton never went to our church.

At last he makes a statement with which I fully agree. To wit, "the Athol factory owner wants the machine-tender to feed metal efficiently to the stamping machine to make more nuts." Incidentally there is no nut factory in Athol, but if there were one, the owner would not want the tender to experiment until he could feed the machine metal and have it deliver macaroni. But there is no reason even to seem to presume from this self-evident fact that "Athol people want their ministers to go on feeding the public soothing pills to purge melancholy." This is sophistry, and more than that, I think it is a gross exaggeration. In the bitter face of agnosticism, doubt, and disappointment, Dr. Sheffer has but one kind of pills to dispense: the daring, courageous hope of humanism. No one could ever imagine him, of all absolutely earnest people, dispensing his pills with "an ingratiating, bedside manner." That's downright silly.

I am not much of a student of religion nor ecclesiastics, and I am much less a student of great worldly movements and tendencies. I should have to be pretty much inspired or intoxicated to presume to point out just how Unitarianism is working out all over America. But I do think I can see what is going on under my own nose. And when I am told that the church I support has a "liberal face but a weak back" and that the people of my church "want something which requires only lip service and cash contributions," I feel strongly that these are misstatements, something Martin Luther put forth gracefully enough for me back in the sixteenth century. I am growing very, very weary of these frivolous, ineffectual attempts at ridiculing Rotary Clubs, Unitarianism, democracy, human nature, and everything except the Union of Socialistic Soviet Republics. RICHARD BATES ELLIS.

III.

Mr. Palmer cites three defalcations in recent Universalist and Unitarian denominational administration as evidence of a moral collapse in administrative affairs. If there be but three such offenses, I consider that it shows an amazingly high average of business honesty. In all probability there are several other cases which have not been discovered. although the great recession of the economic tide has pretty well laid bare the foundations and revealed what otherwise would never have been discovered. But for that, Kreuger might have gone down in history as a financial genius. It has always been thus and things have never been just as they outwardly appeared. The man most responsible for the founding of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company gambled with the securities of the Bank of British North America to promote the scheme. Had the venture proved a failure, he would have been exposed and have gone to the penitentiary. It succeeded and he received a title. Had Judas met his death on the day before the Crucifixion, we might now have stately cathedrals in honor of St. Judas Iscariot. The liberal churches have no reason to feel ashamed of their comparative standing in the matter of business integrity.

We all demand efficiency in the business administration of our churches, and that means playing the game according to the rules. When such efficiency presses us severely we are apt to discover that the rules of the game are not very highly ethical. To use the "unrighteous Mammon" effectively for the overthrow of the kingdom of Mammon is no easy task; and yet there seems to be no way out of it.

Concerning the freedom of the pulpit there appears to be a good deal of loose thinking. The man in the pulpit cannot afford to play fast and loose with his convictions. Neither can the man in the pew; and the pulpit should recognize that. Most people fail to understand the principles of toleration. It is my duty to see that my neighbor is protected in his right to express his opinion, but it does not follow that it is my duty to support those opinions. I insist that the Communists have a right to put a candidate for the presidency before the American people, but I will not in any way support that candidate.

The indictment of Brahmanism brought against liberal churches is an old and well-founded one. There is a natural and strong temptation to the intellectually enlightened and superior classes to hold themselves contemptuously aloof from the multitude; but there is every evidence to show that there is less of it today than ever before. Of course a label may be made to mean anything, and what Messrs Orton and Palmer do not seem to realize is that it is folly to demand freedom of expression in an organization where there is not unity of fellowship, and fellowship depends upon a practical agreement regarding what constitutes the highest spiritual values. From what has been made known of the Lynn church-trouble it appears that the basic mistake of both parties was in starting with the assumption that Mr. Palmer could get along satisfactorily in such a church.

Both Mr. Palmer and Mr. Orton conclude that there has been a sad retrogression in the spiritual attitude of the Unitarian denomination. They infer this from the fact that it is no longer the spiritual home of such great leaders of thought as it was a century ago. That was indeed an age of great Unitarian names. But then, as now, most of the leaders of rebel humanitarian thought were not in Unitarian congregations. It is common to hear Jefferson and Franklin spoken of as Unitarians. They were unitarians with a small U. Few men were more denounced and disliked by the great body of Unitarian laity and clergy than Jefferson who never belonged to a Unitarian church. A hundred years ago the most prominent member of the Unitarian church in the South was John C. Calhoun; and nearly a hundred years ago Emerson, then a very unpopular Unitarian among his brethren, was writing in his journal of "the corpse-cold Unitarianism of Boston and Brattle Street"—the street on which lived so many wealthy Unitarians who had made their money in the slave traffic.

Mr. Orton draws a vivid and pretty correct picture of Athol, Massachusetts; but Athol Unitarianism is not a fair average, and even that is a great improvement on what it was in the good old days of "fine old Georgian houses and spacious green Common with its elms and maples," and rigidly barring from its pulpit any anti-slavery utterances.

The writer possesses a far better knowledge of religious conditions on the American continent than the majority of present-day critics and can honestly and confidently assert that, except in some spots where

afflicted with that dread disease, *dementia americana nordica,* the Unitarian and Universalist churches are the best agencies which exist for the religious enlightenment of the public. It is also true that this is not saying a great deal for them. Nor does either of these gentlemen seem to have anything better to offer.

It is true that the literature of our time is not friendly to Unitarianism, nor to anything else of a constructive religious nature. In the main it is cynical and spiritually benumbing. A few years ago the community church movement was heralded as the savior of our religious life. Who places any dependence upon it now? In every way those undenominational community churches are at the level of the local commercial club by whose grace they exist. I maintain that the two liberal denominations offer unusual opportunities for spiritual pioneering. Whose fault is it if those opportunities are not taken? Were I young again I would unhesitatingly choose the Unitarian ministry as the gateway to useful work, and I would expect to sit on the opposition benches. I have often urged promising and somewhat discontented young ministers to remain in the Unitarian or Universalist ranks and not to look for a good place there, but to make a place for themselves by taking some parish in a needy field which others would not have. I am reminded of a remark made fifteen years ago by Dr. Levi Powers. I had said to him that I believed that there was even more social narrowness and exclusiveness in the Universalist than in the Unitarian churches. To this he replied, "Yes, we have more in quantity but it is very poor quality. Toryism in the Unitarian Church is more brainy. With us it is stupid and easily outwitted. That's why I'm staying with the Universalists."

My great hope is that, in the near future, the united liberal churches will be made the base for a movement for the founding of a new Church Catholic, a new Universalism, to take the place of our nationalistic sectarianism. But before we can have much use for a greatly improved church machinery we must have young men and women who can see the social and religious needs of the times and who are willing to take advantage of the opportunities now offered them through the two liberal churches. All this involves getting away from easy conventionalism, to which most of the rebel element still adheres, and adopting a new evangelization adapted to the opportunities and requirements of the age; and I think that a few articles like that of Vrest Orton will help mightily in bringing that about.

ERNEST M. WHITESMITH

IV

I have been of the opinion for sometime that everything has not been all right at 25 Beacon Street, and that the Unitarian churches ought to be told that their absolute confidence in Unitarian Headquarters was not justified. The two articles in your issue of today's date have confirmed my opinion and constrained me to ask permission to use your columns to bring to public notice the high-handed treatment meted to me by the directors of the American Unitarian Association.

I am the only colored Unitarian minister in America. I took a special two-years' course at the Meadville Theological School, won the respect and confidence of professors and students, and received the special certificate of the school. On June 4, 1912, I was ordained in the Meadville Unitarian Church by Dr. Franklin Southworth, assisted by other Unitarian ministers, among whom was Dr. Minot Simons. Since then I have been continuously engaged in the work of the ministry, and have at last seen my efforts crowned by the establishment in New York City of a unique and promising religious-educational institution, the Hubert Harrison Memorial Church, Harlem.

After two previous unsuccessful attempts to remove my name from the official list of Unitarian ministers, it was summarily removed by the Fellowship Committee on May 23, 1929. The two previous attempts were respectively made in May, 1925, and in February, 1928.

I was subsequently informed that the removal was ordered by the directors of the American Unitarian Association who nevertheless sat as a Board of Review to hear my appeal against what I believed was the action of the Fellowship Committee, and I now understand that the reason for the removal was that I violated a promise not to solicit funds from Unitarian churches.

Bridging the years and omitting all that took place in the interval, I come to the appointment of a special committee to review the case. The committee met in New York in January of this year and presented two reports each signed by two members of a committee of four, one recommending the reinstatement of my name, the other disapproving. The directors by a majority vote adopted the report which sustained their own illegal and arbitrary action.

The rules framed for the guidance of the Fellowship Committee are very explicit as to the reasons for and the manner of removal of names, and there is no rule or section of a rule that remotely applies to me; but in my case rules were but a scrap of paper to be thrown aside to make it possible for the officers of the A U. A. to carry out the action which they had not the nerve to do in 1925 or 1928.

The reason given is of course not the real reason. It is as stupid as it is inadequate. The real reason is contemptible. One of the members of the special committee boldly albeit naively stated it.

If it were not scandalous it would be ludicrous, in the light of the two remarkable articles published by you, to note that the moral indignation of the officers and directors of the A. U. A. was aroused against me to such an extent because I was so immoral as to violate a solemn promise that from a high sense of duty they had to dismiss me from fellowship, while at the same time two men in responsible official positions were actual embezzlers, and while, according to Mr. Palmer, my accusers, prosecutors and judges—the men in charge of affairs at national headquarters are weaklings and moral cowards and men unable to face an issue squarely and fight it out in the open.

I had decided to let this disgusting episode die and be forgotten; but it appears that nothing is settled until it is settled right. Now that the matter is in the open I suggest that it is scandalous enough to call for further investigation for the sake of the honor of the Unitarian church.

(REV.) ETHELRED BROWN.

The Study Table

Upton Sinclair's Life Story

Upton Sinclair has given us a fascinating and delightful autobiography.* Portions of his life have been described in some of his former books, but here we get a bird's-eye view of the whole career of this unique genius, who has assailed the chief iniquities of his time with extraordinary power, whose books are translated into many languages and read by millions in Europe and Asia, while in America they have a much more limited circulation (except "The Jungle"), and are frowned upon by good society. But then, as Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote long ago, "Good society always has sat as a dead weight on any rising attempt at reform."

There is much fresh material in the book, and many curious anecdotes that throw a new and sometimes rather startling light upon various well-known personalities—Theodore Roosevelt, Nicholas Murray Butler, Judge Lindsey, Inez Milholland, Michael Williams, and many more. Most interesting of all, however, is the picture the book gives of the unfolding of the author's own character, and the influences that shaped it. He says:

> Readers of my novels know that I have one favorite theme, the contrast of the social classes; there are characters from both worlds, the rich and the poor, and the plot is contrived to carry you from one to the other. The explanation is that, from the first days I can remember, my life was a series of Cinderella transformations, one night sleeping on a vermin-ridden sofa in a lodging-house, and the next night under silken coverlets in a fashionable home. It was always a question of one thing—whether my father had the money for that week's board. If he didn't, my mother paid a visit to her father, the railroad official. No Cophetua or Aladdin in fairy lore ever stepped back and forth between the hovel and the palace as frequently as I.

Like Catherine Breshkovsky, he besieged his mother with the question, "Why are some children poor and others rich?" He says:

> The other factor in my revolt—odd as it may seem—was the Protestant Episcopal Church. I really took the words of Jesus seriously, and when I carried the train of Bishop Potter in a confirmation ceremony in the Church of the Holy Communion, I thought I was helping to glorify the rebel carpenter, the friend of the poor and lowly, the symbol of human brotherhood. Later, I read in the papers that the bishop's wife had had fifty thousand dollars' worth of jewels stolen, and had set the police to hunting for the thief. I couldn't understand how a bishop's wife could own fifty thousand dollars' worth of jewels; and the fact stuck in my mind, and had a good deal to do with the fading away of my churchly ardor.

Among the most interesting things in the book is Sinclair's account of his education at the College of the City of New York and at Columbia University. He says:

> From the age of perhaps seventeen to twenty-two, I faced our civilization of class privilege absolutely alone in my own mind; that is to say, whatever I found wrong with this civilization, I thought that I alone knew it, and the burden of changing it rested upon my spirit. Such was the miracle which capitalist education had been able to perform upon my young mind, during the eleven or twelve years that it had charge of me. It could not keep me from realizing that the rule of society by organized greed was an evil thing, but it managed to keep me from knowing that there was anybody else in the world who thought as I did; it managed to make me regard the current movements, Bryanism and Populism, which sought to remedy this evil, as vulgar, noisy, and beneath my cultured contempt.

Sinclair tells how his "good and gentle father" was ruined by drink, and how the thirty years' misery resulting from this made him the uncompromising foe of liquor, and filled him with compassion for women. The reader is struck throughout with his chivalrous attitude towards women, including his first wife. He marched in the first suffrage parade, and long association with all sorts of unconventional Bohemians and loose-livers has not availed to shake his so-called Puritanism. No attempt can be made here to give even an outline of his remarkable and many-sided life which he sketches with characteristic frankness and boldness. The book should have a wide reading.

ALICE STONE BLACKWELL.

*"American Outpost," by Upton Sinclair. Farrar & Rinehart, N. Y. $2.50.

A Book of Poems

Sincerity and sympathy are the prime essentials of poetry—and they are marked characteristics of "Archway of Dream"† by Elizabeth Voss, whose poetry is already known to readers of UNITY.

Every line in this collection rings with clarity of conviction and is warm with a lovely feeling for the unity of life. Hers are often "songs of little things you share. . . . The little things, how great they are!" Yet she sings with reverence and rapture of the miracles of birth and death, the sacraments of brotherhood and home. She says truly:

> I can see a glowing symbol
> In a common stick or stone.

What is more, she can make the reader, too, feel it. For the poetic craftsmanship in this little book is admirable. The rhythms are smooth, the rhymes accurate, the images felicitous . . . which is more than can be said of the work of many whose names are touted to the brazen skies. She sings to a chipping sparrow, "Hail to the gallant chaps who try"—but she herself is one who *achieves* song that is beauty.

RALPH CHEYNEY.

†"Archway of Dream," by Elizabeth Voss. Poetry Publishers, 529 Callowhill St., Philadelphia, Pa. 50c.

The Field

(*Continued from page* 18)

seen the sunrise or gone to Interlaken and the Wengren Alps and the Schilthorn and the Great St. Bernard? . . . I remember a savory dinner of goat's flesh and something else in the monastery, a talk with the monk about Renan's 'Life of Jesus'; then the cold cell and the posture of the priests at mass ere they set out at early morning with their dogs, over the snow.

"And I washed in the Sacred Lake of Geneva and was clean.

"I agree with you on the Peace Question. Total Disarmament. But it is a big pill for the politicians and patriots to swallow—harder to swallow than Jonah was for the fish. More like Jonah swallowing the whale.

"We don't hear anymore of the Conference of the World's Religions for Peace. I hope it is to come off. Were I younger, I might go. The religious question goes deeper than the war question—don't you think? What is the goal of life? Quo Vadis? If only we could get religion pure and undefiled on our side . . . Today at the Ladies Reading Club, I read out of a strange book: 'On the Edge of the Etheric.' Have you seen it? What would be the effect of physicists' demonstrations to the senses this side the hereafter.

"We are having terrible depression here and political war. . . . We have progressed in penology. . . .

"Have you ever been in Zurich? There was a most liberal church there. Heinrich Lang I used to read. Too much of a rationalist, but some fine things in his sermons.

"Excuse bad composition" (The letter was written like Paul's Epistles—with his "own hand.")

"The flesh is weak. Now I must retire for the night. So, I pronounce the Benediction and sign myself

"Charles Australia."

It is interesting, isn't it? a letter from far-off Australia, bringing with it memories and fragrance of over a century ago, with unconquerable spirit.

The same mail brought a letter from my friend John Brailsford, now in educational work in New Zealand. He suffered very much for conscience sake during the war. He has been a first-class journalist, in Australia, China, Japan, and San Francisco. One of the earth's most truthful persons. He gives a new angle:

"When I received your letter, I said to myself, 'I wish I had your faith'—with half a notion that you were too hopeful. But, on second thoughts, I see the opportunity may be unique. While the Disarmament Conference is sitting Russia, America, China, and Japan are in fellowship with the League countries (China and Japan may be out of the League soon.) Afterwards, Geneva may be for a long time only a European centre. If only *India* and the *Filipinos* and other subject peoples were represented, one might see

"The hope of the City of God

"At the other end of the road."

"Not a very long road either. Even as it is, there may be glorious opportunities. I do hope that your faith may be rewarded. Even the hard old Romans were moved by the devotion of Telemachus and stopped their gladiatorial shows. I don't want you to meet the fate of Telemachus, but may your faith have as rich a reward.

"I have just written a reply to the American Friends' Service Committee's suggestion for the formation of an International Society of Friends. I have plead that it be a wide-open fellowship, such that Asiatics might join freely and on an equality, and that it engage in some immediate activity such as promoting associations of all nations and races. Our hope is in the young including the 'young in spirit.'

John Brailsford, Wanganui, N. Z."

SYDNEY STRONG

American Views on India

[Our readers will be interested in the following letter published in the London *Times* on May 19th last. Its author is an English-bred Indian woman not unknown to American audiences as a suave British propagandist. A prominent Englishman writes of her in a private letter: "Here she (Miss Sorabji) has been carefully nursed and only allowed to mix among uncommon people, so that she is quite incurably pro-British, and having an Indian name, she carries weight in certain circles."—Editor.]

To the Editor of the Times

Sir:

I have just returned from an extensive tour in the United States of America, and I would like to testify to the fact that the feeling towards England is very different from what I found it in 1930. We still have against us the aggressive supporters of Gandhi, represented by John Haynes Holmes, the New History Society, and writers and journalists of the school of Will Durant, with those who, like the Quaker Community, are not anti-British, but uphold Gandhi in the belief that he helps the cause of peace. Yet, judging by one's audiences, Americans, though sentimental by temperament, are intelligent and fair-minded. They say, quite justifiably, that it is the fault of the supporters of law and order that the revolutionaries have made so much headway in their country.

The discussion of Indian affairs in the *Times* is awaited with real interest. But there are fundamental misconceptions, as well as mis-statements made by Gandhi's followers, which need deliberate rebuttal. The Indian National Congress is thought of as a parallel to Congress in America, in an India which has still to fight for freedom, the inhabitants being in the position of negroes before the abolition of slavery. "We have," they say, "a sweeper class created by England," and they complain that ancient systems of education, agriculture, and self-government, with a world-wide trade in handicrafts, have been swept away to supply work for British unemployed and to enrich England. These are some of the things which are said, in addition to the old cries about Indian poverty, the Army, and the economic drain. Again, they say "Britain is treating India as she treated America. You had to get rid of her before you could find your soul. It is to a free people that we turn in our 'fight for freedom.'" There is no one on hand to point out that there can be no need for a "fight for freedom" in a country which has been offered self-government, the achievement of which is only awaiting the settlement of disagreements between Indians themselves.

Since the last Round-Table Conference Gandhi as a politician has been discounted by the thoughtful; that is why his followers are emphasizing his personality, sheltering behind his "sainthood" and his gospel of peace, to beg help for their political program. How many are there who realize that in exalting Gandhi we are playing into the hands of those whose object is to promote discord and delay self-government? It is well known that funds are being collected in America for the National Indian Congress; and the ceremony on April 25, in the Community Church, New York, at which Gandhi was presented with the medal for "The outstanding religious service to the world in 1931" is interesting, because, as Rabbi Wise put it to the congregation:

"We must dedicate ourselves to the quest for freedom for the people of India. I would have this award serve notice on that mighty Empire of Britain that there are thousands and millions in this country who will not rest until India is free."

J. H. Holmes had already appealed in the newspapers to the American public to boycott England because Gandhi was in prison. Such statements and appeals naturally encourage the subversive elements in India.

The issue of the Ordinances has made a good impression on Americans, who realize that it is to the interest of the new Indian Government that the country should be restored to law and order. At the moment Gandhi's followers are doing all they can to prevent self-government functioning while Gandhi and the Congress leaders are still in prison. Have they not said: "Even though the King and the British Parliament sanction the reforms, they could not be put into effect without Mahatma Gandhi's approval and consent"? They quote in support of the event of 1931.

The value of even volunteer work by private individuals to counteract the Congress publicity board has been proved. But my contention is that there should be organized publicity in America, in England, and especially in India, by speech, writing, and the wireless, to deal immediately with current misrepresentation. If to the intelligent onlooker silence and inaction seem unworthy betrayal of friends and loyal servants, what must the illiterate peasant in India make of the flood of abuse and misrepresentation of the Government itself, which is allowed, uncontradicted, to be his chief source of information upon public events?

—*Cornelia Sorabji.*

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